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SUMMARY OF DRV NAVAL RELAECTIONS OF DESOTO PATROL 31 JULY-

11 AUGUST 1964

1. INTRODUCTION:

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES DRV NAVAL REFLECTIONS OF AND REACTIONS

TO THE DESOTO PATROL, U.S.S. MADDOX AND U.S. S. C. TURNER

JOY. AS NOTED IN DRV NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS INTERCEPTED AT

USN-27 AND USN-27J DURING THE PERIOD 31 JULY - 11 AUGUST

THE U.S.S. MADDOX ARRIVED AT A POINT (ALFA) WEST OF

TIGER ISLAND AT 311100Z AND THENCE PROCEEDED NORTH ALONG

THE DRV COAST. THE MADDOX CONTINUED ON HER TRACK UNHINDERED

BUT CONSTANTLY UNDER TRACKING SURVEILLANCE BY SHORE BASED

ELEMENTS AND/OR VISUAL OBSERVATION BY DRV NAVAL ENTITIES

UNTIL APPROXIMATELY 020800Z WHEN IN THE

VICINITY OF 19-47N/106-31E SHE CAME UNDER

TORPEDO ATTACK BY THREE DRV MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS.

APPROXIMATELY THIRTY MINUTES LATER THE U.S. S. MADDOX RETIRED TO

THE SOUTHEAST LEAVING ONE MTB SUNK AND TWO BADLY DAMAGED. ON

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AUGUST U.S. NAVAL AIRCRAFT RETALIATED WITH RAIDS AGAINST CERTAIN

SPORADIC REFLECTIONS OF U.S. NAVAL FORCES WERE NOTED.

11. DETAILS.

THE FOLLOWING IS A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS AS REFLECTED ON

DRV NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE PERIOD. THE ENTRY OF

THE DE SOTO PATROL INTO THE GULF OF TONKIN IS BELIEVED TO HAVE

BEEN INITIALLY REFLECTED IN DRV NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS AT 311920Z

WHEN BEN THUY, HEADQUARTERS SOUTHERN FLEET, REPORTED AN "ENEMY

SHIP TWENTY NAUTICAL MILES FROM LY HOA (17-38N 106-30E) BEARING

050 DEGREES." AT 011009Z THE DE SOTO ON A NORTHERLY TRANSIT

ALONG THE VIETNAMESE COAST WAS AGAIN REFLECTED WHEN AN UNIDENTIFIED

DRV ENTITY REPORTED "AT SEA OFF QUA G BINH THERE IS ENEMY ACTIVITY

.. AWAIT ORDERS." HAIPHONG REPORTED THE POSITION OF THE ENEMY

AT 1235Z AS NINE POINT THREE MILES FROM HON ME (19-21N 105-56E)

BEARING 148 DEGREES.

DURING THE DE SOTO PATROL'S APPROXIMATE TWO AND A HALF

FOUR TRANSIT FROM QUANG BINH TO THE HOA ME AREA FOUR DRU VESSELS

WERE REFLECTED IN THE AREA A D WERE REPORTEDLY AWARE OF THE
ENEMY'S PRESENCE. DURING THIS PERIOD THE SWATOW CLASS PGMS
T-377 (EX T-185) AND T-255 (EX T-163) WERE ADJACENT TO HON NGU
(18-47-48N 105-45-08E) AND THE SWATOW CLASS PGMS T-142 AND T-146
WERE IN THE IMMEDIATE HON ME AREA.

S THE FIRST INDICATION OF CONTEMPLATED DRV HOSTILE REACTION TO
THE DE SOTO WAS AT 011627Z WHEN SOUTHERN FLEET HEADQUARTERS BEN
THUY INFORMED THE T-255 THAT THE DECISION H D BEEN MADE "TO
FIGHT TONIGHT." SUBSEQUENTLY, AT 011641Z, PROBABLY HAIPHONG
CLEARED COASTAL WATERS OF ALL SHIPPING A D FISHING VESSELS,
DIRECTING THEM TO ENTER AN NAP (20-35N 106-17E).

AT 011755Z THE FIRST MENTION OF THE "135," NOW IDENTIFIED AS THE 135TH MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT FLOTILLA, WAS MADE. THIS UNIT, COMPRISED OF THREE VESSELS SUBSEQUENTLY IDENTIFIED AS MTBS T-333, T-336, T-339, WAS TO ARRIVE AT HON NE (19-54-40N

106-00-40E) PRIOR TO 022000Z ((SIC)). BY 020212Z A FIFTH
SWATOW PGM, T-166 APPEARED IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF HIN ME. AT
020218Z IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE T-146 MET THE 135TH AT HON NE
AND ALL WERE RETURNING, PROBABLY TO HON ME. LATER, COMRADES

"TE" AND "HUONG," PROBABLY MTB COMMA DERS, WERE ORDERED "TO GO ABOARD THE T-142 IMMEDIATELY." MENTION OF "609" RADIOTELEPHONE

GEAR IN THE SAME MESSAGE INDICATED THAT COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

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WERE PROBABLY ON THE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION. IN THE MEANTIME
(020429Z) THE T-142 AND T-146 WERE QUERIED IF THEY HAD RECEIVED
ORDERS AND REPLIED THAT THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED TO RUN PARALLEL WITH
THE ENEMY FOLLOWING THE LAUNCH OF TORPEDOES. IN WHAT WAS PROBABLY
THE FIRST REPORT AFTER AN ACTUAL SIGHTING, HON ME REPORTED TO
THE T-146 AT 020709Z "ENEMY IS A LARGE SHIP ..PRESENTLY
BEARING 125 DEGREES, DISTANCE 19 MILES, COURSE 27 DEGREES, SPEED
11 KNOTS."

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CLASSIFIED THE U.S.S. MADDOX WAS ATTACKED AT APPROXIMATELY 020800Z
IN THE VICINITY OF 19-41N 106-35E. NO REFLECTION OF THE SPECIFIC
ORDERS TO ATTACK WERE NOTED IN COMINT. SUBSEQUENTLY (TOI 021914Z)

CLASSIFIED THE T-142 REPORTED THE FOLLOWING CHAIN OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO
XAND THROUGH THE ATTACK. AT 020225Z THE T-146 MET THE 135TH
NOMTBIBLOTILLA AT HON NE AND AT 020415Z GUIDED THEM

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CLASSIFIED HON ME WHEN THEY MET THE SWATOW CLASS PGM T-165, AT POSSIBLY
020745Z. AT 020825Z SHE REPORTED SEEING THE 135TH ATTACK THE
ENEMY AND AT 020930Z BOTH THE T-142 AND T-146 RECEIVED ORDERS
TO TURN BACK AND CONCENTRATE THEIR FORCES.

CLASSIFIED BEGINNING AT 021430Z AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN AS TO THE CONDITION
AND WHEREABOUTS OF THE VESSELS OF THE 135TH FLOTILLA WAS
APPARENT. THE T-142 AND T-146 MADE EXTENSIVE SEARCHES IN A
TEN MILE RADIUS OF 19-41N 106-37E AND FINALLY AT 030031Z TWO
VESSELS (T-333, T-336) WERE REPORTEDLY LOCATED (IN A DAMAGED CON-
-DITION) IN THE VICINITY OF HON NE BY THE T-146. AT 030845Z HAIPHONG
HONG WAS NOTIFIED THAT THE T-339 WAS SUNK.

CLASSIFIED ALTHOUGH AS YET UNVERIFIED BY INTERCEPT OF A "HEADQUARTERS"
CRITIQUE" WHICH HAS IN THE PAST FOLLOWED DRV REACTIONS TO HOSTILE
INCURSIONS, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE ATTACK ON THE USS MADDOX
MAY HAVE BEEN PREMATURELY TOUCHED OFF AFTER HAVING BEEN PLANNED

FOR AFTER DARK. AT 020700Z HAIPHONG ORDERED THE T-146 TO

CLASSIFIED "ORDER THE 135 NOT TO MAKE WAR BY DAY. GO TOWARD SHORE AND
RETURN TO HON ME." SUBSEQUENT INTERCEPT REFLECTED, IN AF
ITION
TO T-333, T-336 AND T-539, SIX SWATOW CLASS PGMS (T-142, T-146,
T-165, T-166, T-255 AND T-337) IN THE AREA. ALL OF THESE
XREPORTED THE EAGERNESS OF THEIR CREWS TO MEET THE ENEMY. IN
VIEW OF THE APPARENT INVOLVEMENT OF THE PGMS IN THE 04 AUGUST
ATTACK. THE OVER EAGERNESS OF MTB FLOT 135 MAY HAVE HINDERED
THE DEPLOYMENT OF ZJE PGMS ON 02 AUGUST THEREBY LIMITING THE ROLE
OF THE
LATTER IN THE ATTACK. IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE
IF ANY PGMS WERE SUNK OR DAMAGED DURING THE ATTACK ON THE
MADDOX.

CLASSIFIED AFTER THE ATTACK, THE U. S. S. MADDOX PULLEFMBACK TO THE
VICINITY OF 17-30N 108E WHERE SHE WAS JOINED BY THE USS C.
TURNER JOY FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE PATROL.

CLASSIFIED PROBABLY THE INITIAL REFLECTION OF THE 00 US DESTROYERS
AFTER THEIR RETURN WAS AT 030837Z WHEN A MESSAGE BETWEEN TWO
INIDENTIFIED ENTITIESISEPORTEDS WO ENEMY DESTROYERS BEARING
170 DEGREES. RANGE 25 NAUTICAL MILES, COURSE 0 DEGREES. AT
030958Z THE T-142 REPORTED TWO DESTROYERS 20 NAUTICAL MILES
EAST OF HON ME. THE T-142 WAS THEN ORDERED TO SHADOW THE

DESTROYERS D AT 031155Z WAS NOTIFIED BY AN UNIDENTIFIED

CLASSIFIED ENTITY THAT THE 030934Z POSITION OF THE TWO DESTROYERS WAS
20 MILES EAST OF HON ME, BEARING 60 DEGREES, HEADING EAST. THE
T-142 WAS TO CONTINUE SHADOWING CLOSELY AND TO MAINTAIN

CLASSIFIED CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATIONS WITH HEADQUARTERS AND TO CONTINUE REPORTING
POSITION AND GRID.

CLASSIFIED BY 040102Z AT LEAST ONE OF THE U.S. DESTROYERS WAS REPORTEDLY
ABREAST OF MUI CHAO (19-42-30N 105-55E) A D STILL UNDER SUR-

CLASSIFIED VIELLANCE BY THE T-142. THE T-146 WAS A
GO IN THE GENERAL AREA

CLASSIFIED BUT WAS AIDING THE TWO MTBS (T-333, T-336) OF THE 135TH FLOTILLA.

CLASSIFIED DUE TO AN ALMOST COMPLETE, CONCURRENT DRV COMMUNICATIONS SILENCE

CLASSIFIED CONCERNING

CLASSIFIED THE 04 AUGUST INCIDENT THE ACTUAL NUMBER AND SPECIFIC UNITS INVOLVED

CLASSIFIED IN THE SECOUND ATTACK ON THE U.S. PATROL CANNOT BE DETERMINED.

CLASSIFIED THE SWAZFW CLASS PGMS T-130, T-132, T-142, T-165 AND

CLASSIFIED PROBABLE SWAIOW T-379 (EX T-187) WERE IN THE IMMEDIAAE AREA

CLASSIFIED DURING THE TIME FRAME OF THE ATTACK. ALTHOUGH UNCONFIRMED,

CLASSIFIED LATER INTERCEPT INDICATES THAT THE MTB T-333, EVEN THOUGH

CLASSIFIED DAMAGED, MAY HAVE ALSO PARTICIPATED.

THE U. S. RETALIATORY ACTION FOLLOWING THE SECOND DRV ATTACK ON

THE U.S. DESTROYERS WAS REFLECTED AT 080800Z WHEN HAIPONG

INFORMED THE T-142 AND T-146 THAT "ENEMY AIRCRAFT HAVE BOMBARDED

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WERE NOTIFIED THAT THE TUG "BACH DANG" WOULD DEPART HAIPHONG

AT 041800Z. THE TUG WAS TO BE UTILIZED TO TOW THE TWO DAMAGEJP
MTBS (T-333, T-336) BACK. HOWEVER, THE BACH DANG WAS SUBSEQUENTLY

REPORTED TO BE TOWING THE T-132, PROBABLY DAMAGED IN THE AIR

STRIKE ON 05 AUGUST, TO BAI D'ALONG AND THE T-120 WAS TOWING

THE MTBS BACK TO THE SAME AREA, THE T-142 WAS ORDERED TO BAI CHAO

ON 05 AUGUST BUT WAS UNABLE TO COMPLY DUE TO WATER IN THE FUEL

OIL. ON 06 AUGUST SHE REPORTED CH

GING OIL. THIS VESSEL

HAS BEEN OBSERVED RECENTLY IN HAIPHONG PROBABLY UNDERGOING

MINOR ENGINE REPAIR.

FROM 06 THRU 11 AUGUST VERY LITTLE DRV NAVAL ACTIVITY WAS

NOTED IN OTHER THAN THE BAI D'ALONG AREA. NUMEROUS POSITION

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REPORTS. A COMPLETE COLOR AND INSIGNA DESCRIPTION OF FRIENDLY
AIRCRAFT WAS BROADCAST BY PORT WALLUT POSSIBLY
INDICATIONS THAT THE NAVY MISTAKENLY SHOTDOWN ONE OF THEIR OWN
PLANES. AT 060940Z PORT WALLUT REPORTED THE CAPTURE OF ONE

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AMERICAN PILOT ATDIQN 09 AUGUST (AT 0257Z) INDICATED THAT THE
BODY OF ONE AMERICAN PILOT HAD BEEN RECOVERED FROM THE WATER
AT AN UNDE
MINED AREA ALONG THE COAST.

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THE SO-1 CLASS SUBCHASERS T-225, T-221/ T-229, T-231, ARE
KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN ACTIVE DURING THE PERIODS OF ATTACK BUT
THEY WERE NOT ISOLATED BY PENNANT NUMBER UNTIL WGL VESSELS
HAD RETREATED TO THE BAI D'ALONG. AREA THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT
AS A RESULT OF THE RETALIATORY ATTACKS THE T-225 AND T-231 MAY HAVE
BEEN DAMAGED.

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THE FOLLOWING VESSELS WERE ISOLATED BY PENNANT DURING

THE PERIODYSEQ JULY - 11 AUGUST:

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SO-1 CLASS SUBCHASERS

T-225 (T-25) POSSIBLY DAMAGED

T-227 (T-27)

T-229 (T-29)

T-231 (T-31) POSSIBLY DAMAGED

SWATOW CLASS PGMS

Q T-122

T-124

A T- P POSSIBLY SUNK

T-132 POSSIBLY DAMAGED

D T-134

U T-140

A L-142

PROBABLY OTC FOR THE ENTIRE PERIOD

Q T-146

5 T-165

L T-166

T-225 (EX T-163)

IED T-377 (EX T-185)

U) T-379 (EX T-187)

UMTBS - 135TH FLOTILLA

T-333 DAMAGED

U. T-336 BRMAGED

AS T-339 SUNK

TUG BACH DANG

III. TRACKING

THE DE SOTO VESSEL(S) WERE EXTENSIVELY TRACKED BY DRV

RADAR FACILITIES THROUGH AT LEAST THE 04 AUGUST ATTACK.

A SUMMARY OF THIS TRACKING DATA IS IN PREPARATION AND

PENDING COLLATION OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION WILL BE ISSUED IN THE

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